HOWARD COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

November 22, 2009

Ms. Diana Lopez
Sam Adams Alliance
20 N. Wacker Drive
Suite 3330
Chicago, IL 60606

RE: Maryland Public Information Act Request

Dear Ms. Lopez:

I am in receipt of your letter dated November 2, 2009, requesting public records of the Howard County Public School System under the Maryland Public Information Act. Specifically, you have requested the following public records of the school system for the time period January 1, 2004 to the present day:

1. "Contracts between the school system and all lobbyists, lobbying organizations, and lobbying firms; additionally any documentation of relationships with individuals or groups that advocate on behalf of or representing the school district or school board."

   To the best of my knowledge, the Board of Education does not have a contractual relationship with any lobbyists, lobbying organizations, or lobbying firms. This is not a denial of your request.

2. "Disclosure of membership to any lobbing organizations (for example, the Maryland Association of Boards of Education)."

   You have not defined "lobbying organizations," and the example you provide, the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), is a membership organization to which all local boards of education belong; it is not a "lobbying organization." Please clarify your request.

3. "Check register data for all payouts, checks, or other disbursements to those lobbyist(s)."

   No records of this nature exist. This is not a denial of your request.

4. "All e-mail and/or other written correspondence between the school system and the lobbyist(s), and between the members of the school board and those lobbyist(s)."

   No records of this nature exist. This is not a denial of your request.

5. "Copies of invitations to any and all legislative receptions that have been sponsored, funded or otherwise underwritten in whole or in part by the school system, along with a breakdown of costs incurred for those receptions."

   Search for the requested records has been initiated.

If the search and preparation of responsive documents exceeds two hours, you will be charged a fee for the search for the records requested for reproducing the records you request; no fee is assessed for the first two hours. We will contact you with an estimate of costs, if we determine that the search and preparation will take over two hours. You will be asked to submit payment for staff time and copies prior to the documents being provided to you.

Sincerely,

Patti Caplan, APR
Director of Public Relations

c: Mark Blom, General Counsel